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HYGIENE

The following course in hygiene has been given the past few years by the directors of physical education to the freshmen class of the high school, the boys and girls being in separate groups.

The study of hygiene must have for its basis some knowledge of the structure and function of the body and its organs, hence enough anatomy and physiology to make the subject intelligible must be included.

Much of the course as here outlined is quite elementary in character; it could, and in my judgment should be given in the elementary school, beginning perhaps in the fifth or sixth grades, or even earlier, where the awakening curiosity about the body, its functions and care would supply a direct motive for this study. There is no good reason for postponing this study until the high school is reached, and there are many good reasons for beginning it earlier. First, the fact that personal habits are more easily and permanently fixed during the plastic years of younger childhood. If study of the care of the body is to result in setting up sound habits of hygienic living and right ideals of physical fitness, it would seem wise to make children intelligent along these lines before wrong or careless habits are fixed, and when it is easier to implant good habits. Secondly, it is in the earlier grades that there is normal curiosity and genuine interest in the body, and children have many questions which should be answered carefully, wisely, and definitely.

Children of the earlier grades can quite easily grasp the laws which underlie the structure and care of the teeth, the main facts of digestion, the choice of foods and the hygiene of eating; the reasons for cleanliness, the value of exercise and its effects upon every part of the body.

The seventh and eighth grades can understand the main facts of the structure and care of the respiratory and circulatory organs, the care of eyes and ears, the cause and treatment of common colds, the seasonal changes of clothing, etc.

It is in these grammar grades that the majority of the girls mature and the boys enter their pubescent period, hence it would seem that this is the place to give to boys and girls, in separate groups, careful instruction in the meaning of the new functions which now develop,

so that they may understand the physical changes and new emotions which now manifest themselves, and be taught intelligent care of themselves at this crucial time of life.

If the topics here suggested were covered broadly in the elementary school, the field would be clear for work in laboratory physiology in connection with a high-school course in biology, to round out the study of the structure, function, and care of the human body.

Some such course as this is the ideal toward which we are looking. Lack of space, laboratory facilities and program difficulties have so far prevented us from realizing this ideal. We have, however, hope for the future.

I. *General Talks on the Skeleton*.—Anatomy: a brief study of the general structure of the body.

II. *Digestive System*.—Foods and food elements, selection of foods for a meal. Appetite; exercise; cooking. Regularity of meals; mastication. Over-feeding; drinking with meals. Beverages, clothing and posture as they affect digestion. Constipation; diarrhea (cause and treatment); drugs.

III. *Teeth*.—Anatomy; causes of decay. Tooth powders, brushes, mouth-washes.

IV. *Respiration*.—Brief anatomy of organs of respiration. Interchange of gases (very elementary). Care of respiratory tract; exercise as it affects respiration.

V. *Muscular System*.—Exercise: kinds, purposes. Rest; curvature of spine; chest deformities.

VI. *Nervous System*.—Brief description; sleep, rest, and relaxation. Its relation to digestion, etc.

VII. *Circulation*.—Brief anatomy of heart, arteries, veins. Description of the mechanics of circulation. Blood—its composition. Adjustments of circulation to every-day needs.

VIII. *Nutrition*.—The sources of power and heat.

IX. *Eyes*.—Protection and care. Common ways of straining. Common defects; glasses.

X. *Ears*.—Care of outer ear. Colds; inflammations; running ear; earache.

XI. *Skin*.—Structure; use; care; baths (kinds and purposes). Face-powders, lotions, soaps. Hair, nails.

XII. *Common Colds*.—Cause; prevention; care.

XIII. *Feet*.—Flat foot; arch troubles; shoes.

XIV. *Reproduction*.—Plants; fish; frogs; birds; mammals. Brief description of the human organs.

(*Girls' Class*) The menstrual function; hygiene of this period.

XV. *Infections and Contagious Diseases*.—How diseases are carried: by water supply; milk supply; common eating and drinking utensils; promiscuous kissing, etc. Need of segregation; disinfection; vaccination; inoculation.

XVI. *Clothing*.—Uses; decency, warmth, ornament. Clothing and the conduction of heat. Clothing and perspiration. Clothing next the skin. Outer clothing. Fabrics.

XVII. *Common Emergencies*.—Cuts; bruises; burns; fainting; etc.

